

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MILAN 01948 081729Z
ACTION EUR-08

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SECSTATE WASHDC 5740
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1948

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINT IT
SUBJECT: DC DEPUTY DE CAROLIS SEES APPROACHING HISTORIC COMPROMISE

1. MILANS' YOUNG, ENERGETIC, ANTI-COMMUNIST REFORMIST CONSERVATIVE DC VOTE-GETTER MASSIMO DE CAROLIS, JUST BACK FROM A VISIT TO PEKING, SAYS THAT HISTORIC COMPROMISE IS RUSHING UP FAST. HE TOLD ME THAT WITHIN NEXT 2 OR 3 MONTHS PCI COULD WELL BE BROUGHT WITHIN MAJORITY BUT NOT INTO GOVERNMENT. IF DC TRIED TO GET PARTY APPROVAL FOR BRINGING PCI INTO GOVT OR PROCEEDED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL, RESULT WOULD BE DC SPLIT.

2. DE CAROLIS CONTENTED THAT ANDREOTTI, MORO AND ZACCAGNINI WERE NOW RESIGNED TO THIS DEVELOPMENT AND THAT MINISTER OF INTERIOR COSSIGA WAS TOO. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE HAD JUST TALKED WITH CARDINAL BENELLI WHO WAS INTRANSIGENT IN HIS OPPOSITION. HOWEVER, IF THE COMPROMESSO CAME, DE CAROLIS DID NOT EXPECT THE CHURCH TO SUPPORT A SPLIT IN THE DC.

3. THE SPLIT, DE CAROLIS SAID, WOULD BE SMALLER IN THE PARTY THAN IN ITS ELECTORATE. HIS OWN GROUP OF DEPUTIES NUMBERED ABOUT A
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DOZEN BUT HE WAS SURE THAT THE NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY DEFECTORS WOULD BE LARGER. THE MAJOR SUPPORT WOULD BE AMONG THE PUBLIC WHICH GAVE HIM GROWING BACKING. FANFANI AND OTHER OLD ANTI-COMMUNIST LEADERS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT BREAK PARTY RANKS.

4. IT WAS TRUE THAT A DC SPLIT WOULD AUTOMATICALLY MAKE THE PCI NUMBER ONE, WITH ALL THAT IMPLIED. IT WOULD HAVE TO BE A PART OF

EVERY GOVERNMENT, CONSULTED FIRST BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, ETC. DE CAROLIS PREDICTED THAT THE DC SCHISMATICS WOULD BECOME ITALY'S THIRD PARTY JOINED BY REMNANTS OF THE LIBERALS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS.

5. HE HOPED THAT THIS GRIM SCENARIO COULD BE AVOIDED. THERE WAS STILL A CHANCE IF THE GOVT WOULD MAKE REAL CHANGES IN POLICY. BUT HE SAW LITTLE REASON TO EXPECT THAT. THE OLD LEADERS HUNG ON AT ANY COST AND THOSE WHO OPPOSED THEM WERE INCREASINGLY OSTRACIZED, DISDAINED AND REVILED. DE CAROLIS AND HIS COLLEAGUES COULD REMAIN IN THE DC IF IT WENT AHEAD WITH THE COMPROMESSO STORICO BUT ONLY IF THEY WERE RESIGNED TO SILENCE AND IMPOTENCE. HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO PAY THAT PRICE. BUT HE AND THOSE WHO AGREED WITH HIM WERE PREPARING TO GIVE THE PARTY LEADERSHIP A JOLT TO WARN IT OF THE RISK OF SCHISM.

6. ITALY, CONCLUDED DE CAROLIS, IS COMING UNGLUED.FINA

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